Collecting a 24 hour urine sample
Information and advice for patients

What is a 24 hour urine sample?
A 24 hour urine sample is a collection of all the urine you pass over a period of 24 hours.

What are the benefits of a 24 hour urine sample?
The benefit of a 24 hours urine sample is that it can help your doctor to diagnose your condition or monitor treatment you are receiving. Because the urine we produce varies throughout the day and night, the differences are ‘averaged out’ by collecting all urine over 24 hours, so we can get a more reliable result than a single urine sample for some tests.

What are the risks of a 24 hour urine sample?
There are no risks to collecting a 24 hour urine sample but in a few cases the test may need to be repeated. This could be due to technical reasons, or because the results are not clear or the instructions have not been followed carefully.

Before collecting your sample
Before you begin to collect your urine sample please read page 2 to see if your test has any special requirements. Do not start your collection on a Friday or Saturday as you may not be able to return the sample once the collection is complete.

You should have been given a large plastic bottle to collect your sample in. If you have not, please contact your physician’s office or call Total Lab Client Services at 551-996-4881.

Collecting your sample
1. Begin the test when you get up in the morning. Empty your bladder completely and dispose of this urine sample - do not put it into the bottle.
2. Note the time (for example 8 am Monday) and collect ALL urine passed after this time for the next 24 hours. To do this, urinate into a separate clean container such as a plastic cup and then pour it into the bottle provided.
3. Collect the last urine at the same time you started the collection on the following day (e.g. 8 am Tuesday).
4. Screw the top on the bottle tightly. Please take extra care not to contaminate the outside of the container with urine. Please keep the urine container refrigerated during the 24 hour collection.

After collecting your sample
When you have finished collecting your sample make sure that your name, date of birth and the date and time of the start and end of the collection are written on the container in BLOCK CAPITAL LETTERS and the request form is attached to the container.
Please check that the cap is firmly screwed onto the container. Unfortunately, if the urine leaks in transit, the collection will be invalid and the analysis will not be carried out. Place the bottle in the plastic bag provided. Seal the bag.

The container should then be taken as soon as possible to Suite 400, Outpatient Laboratory, 20 Prospect Avenue, Hackensack NJ 07601 as the sample must be fresh to give reliable results. Your sample will then be tested in the clinical chemistry laboratory, although some samples may be sent away to a more specialized laboratory.

What if I can’t get to the outpatient laboratory that day?
Should you have to, you can store the bottle in the refrigerator for one day. Ideally, it should be handed in as soon as possible after the collection has been completed.

Suite 400 Outpatient Laboratory hours of operation are:
Monday – Friday 6:30am – 7:00 pm
Saturday 7:00am – 3:00pm

What should I do if I spill or lose any of the urine?
In the event of spillage or any loss of urine, the test result would be incorrect. You must obtain a new collection bottle to start a new collection.

How do I get the results of the test?
The results will be sent to the doctor who requested the test and they will discuss the results with you. Results can take up to 2 weeks from the time you hand in the sample.

Special requirements
Urine collection for 5HIAA, urine Serotonin or catecholamines
If you have been asked to collect a sample for 5HIAA, urine serotonin or catecholamines, please do not have the following foods or medications for the 48 hours before and the 24 hours that you are collecting the urine sample:
Food: Avoid Avocados, all fruit (for example apples, oranges bananas, cantaloupe, grapefruit, kiwifruit, melons, pineapple, plantains, plums), coffee, chocolate, dates, eggplant, flavorings (especially vanilla), all nuts and tomatoes and tomato products, all of which are high in serotonin, for 48 hours before and during collection. Patient should also avoid tobacco, tea and coffee for 48 hours before and during specimen collection.
Medications: aspirin, pain relievers (specifically those containing acetaminophen [Tylenol], salicylates [aspirin] or phenacetin), cough syrups containing guaifenesin or antihistamines, nasal drops and sprays, L-dopa (Levodopa or Methyldopa, used to treat high blood pressure, for example. Please discuss with your physician before discontinuing any medications.

Urine collection for renal stone screen
If you have been asked to collect a sample for a renal stone screen, please do not eat the following foods for the 48 hours before and the 24 hours that you are collecting the urine sample:
Food: Avoid Rhubarb, plain dark chocolate, vitamin C tablets or multivitamin tablets
Avoid large amounts of: strawberries, raspberries, blueberries particularly blackcurrants and redcurrants, oranges or orange juice, sweetcorn, parsley, red and green peppers.